

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

Pre-hibernation parasitoid-induced mortality in larvae of *Ladoga camilla* (L.) (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae).—On 21.viii.92, two third-instar larvae of *Ladoga camilla* were collected in a Devonshire woodland showing signs of failure to diapause. This is an unusual event with *L. camilla* under natural conditions, except rarely in exceptionally early seasons.

Shortly after their collection, it became apparent that the larvae were parasitized and both larvae died in their third instars. The subsequent parasitoids and their cocoons were retained for identification. At the 1992 BENHS Annual Exhibition, these were identified by Dr M. R. Shaw and were subsequently presented to him.

From one, a female *Phobocampe* sp. (Ichneumonidae: Campopleginae) had hatched. From the other a female *Mesochorus* sp. (Ichneumonidae: Mesochorinae) had emerged. All Mesochorinae are "true" hyperparasites—the female lays its eggs in a parasitoid larva while the latter is itself feeding inside the host. The original parasitoid goes on feeding, emerges from the host and makes its cocoon. It is then killed by the mesochorine larva and its adult emerges in due course.

I have occasionally collected parasitized *L. camilla* larvae from the wild, but the parasitoids do not kill the larvae until the final instar, the following year having apparently diapaused within the host. However, if diapause of parasitized larvae is prevented (using a fixed long day length on 1- to 7-day-old larvae), the parasitoids similarly do not diapause and kill the larva in the final instar in late August or September of the same year.

I am indebted to Dr M. R. Shaw for his invaluable help and information.—K. E. J. Bailey, Dipfield, Thorverton, Near Exeter, Devon EX5 5PJ.

REFERENCE

- Shaw, M. R. 1981. Parasitism by Hymenoptera of larvae of the white admiral butterfly, *Ladoga camilla* (L.), in England. *Ecol. Ent.* 6: 333–335.

***Silpha obscura* L. (Coleoptera: Silphidae) new to Wales.**—Hyman & Parsons (1992) have recently drawn attention to the fact that this species has declined over much of its English range and that recent records are all from the south-west. They have accordingly given it Red Data Book category 2 (vulnerable) status. It is particularly pleasing therefore to report it from Pembrokeshire, new to Wales: Whitesands Bay (SM 733272), 25.vi.1988, during a field meeting of the Dyfed Invertebrate Group. A single beetle was found on the coastal path where it crosses wind-blown sand grassland on the north side of the bay. My only other record for this species is of a single specimen at Pentire Head (SW 935805), E. Cornwall, 12.vii.1979. The clifflands of south-western Britain are proving to be an important last reserve for many of our open country species which continue to be threatened inland by agricultural, tree-planting and other developments.—K. N. A. Alexander, 22 Cecily Hill, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 2EF.

REFERENCE

- Hyman, P. S. (Revised Parsons, M. S.) 1992. *A review of the scarce and threatened Coleoptera of Great Britain*. Part 1. Peterborough: Joint Nature Conservation Committee.